

SENATOR WITEK: Sorry, just one more question of Senator Rasmussen. So, essentially, what we're doing is denying school choice to the parents in Omaha Public Schools and surrounding areas should they want to either go into the Omaha schools or have Omaha parents go into schools that are closer to home, say Westside, or Millard, or any of the surrounding areas.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: We are not denying them carte blanche. We are denying them only if that movement, in or out, will have a negative impact on the desegregation plan.

SENATOR WITEK: And we are no longer...we're opting people out of considering the distance that children have to travel. You could bus them from one end of Omaha to the other now because the desegregation plan will have precedent. So the time that the children are on the bus, small children, down to kindergarten, first grade will no longer be considered a priority, the priority will be desegregation.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: They have not had that since 1989, and actually since...it's not even 1989 when the "deseg" plan was court ordered. The 14th Amendment was ruled that the Omaha Public Schools had to have a desegregation plan. They are still accountable for meeting the standards of the 14th Amendment, and we have not had that kind of movement, they've had that ability to move kids from...around in the school district on the basis of the "deseg" plan, which was originally court ordered. So that has not changed and this bill does not change that "deseg" plan that was court ordered.

SENATOR WITEK: Okay, and maybe you know this from looking at this bill. I know...I haven't read...I have read some information in the newspaper on parents who are disappointed in the open enrollment plan, they're not getting their open enrollment choices. Do you happen to know how many of those issues are pending in Omaha at this time that they...

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: No, I don't.

SENATOR WITEK: ...just would...they would no longer have to be in court with any of these individuals if this bill passes.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: No, that's not true at all. You always have the right to appeal.